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ROLEPLAYING GAME

Clear and Present Dangers

An Ultimate Adversaries Web Enhancement

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The *Star Wars* galaxy is home to an amazing array of dangerous beasts, some of which are detailed in the *Ultimate Adversaries* accessory. Many of these creatures are popular sport for big game hunters, who are always driven to add one more head to their trophy room wall. Some creatures—such as rancors and krayt dragons—are hunted for prestige, while others are collected for their rarity. Some creatures, however, present a real danger to civilian populations and must be hunted down for the safety of nearby settlements. Sometimes, these creatures are kept in check by their native environments but become dangerous when transported to different worlds.

This web enhancement to *Ultimate Adversaries* presents three new creatures that threaten settlements: the anooba, the Coruscanti rat, and the saw-toothed grank. It also includes a template for turning any creature into a master hunter.

Anooba

Anoobas are pack predators native to Tatooine. They are thick-skinned quadrupeds with enormous fanglike spurs jutting from their mouths. These are actually horns of ivory-like material that are anchored directly to an anooba's skull, allowing the creature to exert tremendous force. Though largely hairless, an anooba has a ridge of stiff fur running from the base of its skull to the tip of its long tail. An anooba's tail is as long as the creature's head and torso put together, and it's used to counterbalance the beast and to help it radiate heat. An anooba's blood circulates quite close to the surface of its tail, which is constantly sweaty and kept in motion, allowing the anooba to cool itself. Because of this, the creature can exert itself for much longer periods of time than most Tatooine natives.

Anoobas live in packs of 10 to 12 members, ruled over by a dominant mated pair. When young are born, they're cared for and fed for a single season, after which any in excess of the normal pack size are driven off. Many anooba young die in their first year, while the toughest and most cunning form new packs with other young cast-offs. Packs of anoobas work together for all needs, hunting and fighting as a group. A pack of anoobas is able to take down much larger prey and often feeds off a single ronto or bantha kill for days.

Anoobas are usually nocturnal, as their native deserts are cooler at night. However, they can change their sleep cycle as needed to track and kill prey or to avoid other dangerous predators. Anoobas moved to other worlds often become active during the day simply because that's when their prey can be found. On civilized worlds, however, they stick to their night cycle to avoid heavy traffic of armed citizens.

The strong pack instinct of anoobas makes them easily trained, and they are popular hunting animals on many worlds. However, the instinct to drive off young makes domestic anooba packs prone to creating wild populations. Many worlds have found themselves with hundreds of packs of wild anoobas that stalk homeless vagrants in the wilderness or in abandoned buildings. Worlds without such problems usually outlaw domestic anoobas, though big-game hunters often keep a secret kennel of the beasts anyway.

Species Traits

Improved Grab: If an anooba hits with a bite attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. No initial touch attack is required. Improved grab can be used only on opponents of Medium or lesser size. Opponents cannot move past a creature using improved grab. A creature with improved grab draws held opponents toward it (that is, into the 2-meter-by-2-meter space around it).

Pack Grab: If two or more anoobas attempt to grapple the same target, they can grapple a target of Large or even Huge size. To do this, the anoobas must ready their attacks together. Each anooba is allowed to make a grapple check. If two or more anoobas successfully grapple a Large target, they can keep it grappled. If four or more anoobas successfully grapple a Huge target, they can keep it grappled. If at any time after the initial grapple checks, there are fewer than two anoobas grappling a Large target or fewer than four anoobas grappling a Huge target, all anooba grapples on that target end.

Low-Light Vision: An anooba can see twice as far as normal in poor lighting situations. The anooba can still distinguish colors, even in dim light.

Scent: An anooba can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. It can identify familiar odors just as Humans recognize familiar sights and detect opponents within 10 meters by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 20 meters; if downwind, it drops to 6 meters. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents can be detected at triple ranges.

When an anooba detects a scent, the exact location is not revealed. Instead, the anooba knows only that its quarry is present somewhere within range. It must spend a full-round action to note the direction of the scent. Packs of anoobas often spread out to triangulate the location of scented prey. At a range of 2 meters, an anooba can pinpoint the exact location of the scent. Anoobas do not need to guess the location of a fully concealed opponent detected this way.

An anooba can also follow tracks by smell, making a Survival check to find or follow a track. The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10 (no matter what kind of surface holds the scent). This increases or decreases depending on the strength of the quarry's odor, the number of creatures, and the age of the trail. For each hour that has passed, the DC increases by 2. This ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. An anooba tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

Skills: Anoobas are very cunning and tough, gaining a +8 species bonus on Survival checks.

Anooba: Medium-size desert predator 8; Init +3 (+3 Dex.); Defense 16 (+3 Dex, +3 natural); Spd 12 m; VP/WP 60/16; Atk +11 melee (1d8+6, bite) or +11 ranged; Sq species traits; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +6; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep +0; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 19, Cha 6. Challenge Code D.

Skills: Climb +9, Hide +5, Jump +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Spot +11, Survival +15.

Feats: Endurance, Power Attack, Run.

Coruscanti Rat

On Coruscant, the creatures called "rats" are not the tiny vermin described by that word on most other planets. Coruscanti rats are 3-meter-long predators that live in the abandoned lower levels, eating slugs, other predators, and any citizens foolish enough to encounter them. A typical specimen weighs 300 kilograms, is dull gray in color, and has massive razor-sharp incisors. The small, red eyes of a Coruscanti rat and brightly reflect any light shined at them. The creatures have no need for light, and many spend their entire lives in darkness.

No one knows if the creatures are native to Coruscant, as they have obviously been mutated by exposure to the radiation and wastes of the under region of the planet. A typical specimen is covered in sores, tumors, and asymmetrical fat deposits. Coruscanti rats are generally thought of as hairless, though in truth a few scraggly hairs can be found in any given patch of oily skin. Their misshapen, lumpy appearance disguises any hint of their original species traits. It's been suggested that the creatures can be traced back to anything from weermoks to womp rats, but generations of exposure to the world's toxins and mutagens have truly turned them into their own species.

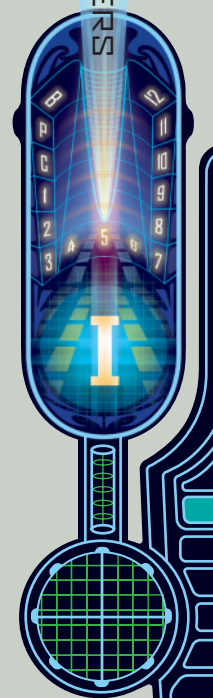
These predators are fearless and ruthless, attacking anything that seems edible, even creatures twice their size. They are too vicious and driven by hunger to give up potential prey, and they've even been known to attack armored repulsor vehicles—unsuccessfully, of course. Most Coruscanti rats travel in packs of as many as 10, though bull males also travel alone. All the females in a pack give birth at once, after constructing a large nest. Each female has a litter of three to five pups, but generally half are born dead. A typical pack has four or five females and produces eight to 10 live pups in each litter. After a few weeks, the litter is able to survive on its own, and the young wander off to form their own pack.

Species Traits

Darkvision: Coruscanti rats can see in the dark out to a range of 30 meters. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight, and Coruscanti rats can function with no light at all.

Disease: A creature that takes wound damage from a Coruscanti rat's bite must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or contract a disease. The organisms in Coruscanti rat saliva have an incubation period of 3d6 hours, and they cause 1d4 points of initial Con damage and 1d4 points of Con damage on subsequent days until the infected creature overcomes the disease (see Chapter 12 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook).

Coruscanti Rat: Large predator 8; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 19 (–1 size, +4 Dex, +6 natural); Spd 20 m, 16 m climb; VP/WP 60/16; Atk +11 melee (1d8+2, bite) and +4 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws) or +11 ranged;



SQ species traits; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +2; Face/Reach 2 m by 4 m/2 m; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 10. Challenge Code D.

Skills: Climb +10, Hide +12, Jump +13, Listen +5, Move Silently +14, Spot +4, Survival +6.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Finesse (bite).

Saw-Toothed Grank

The saw-toothed grank is a small but deadly predator from the marshlands of Naboo. It has a generally feline shape, though it has a short, thick tail and hair only along its flanks. The most notable feature of the saw-toothed grank is its massive jaw and powerful teeth. The teeth are as hard as durasteel and have been reported to chew through modern body armor. The native prey of the saw-toothed grank is a hard-shelled creature called a shiros, which may explain the grank's unusually damaging bite. Saw-toothed granks do not like water and avoid it passionately.

Saw-toothed granks are solitary predators, willing to take on creatures much larger than themselves. When hunting, a grank charges prey from cover and locks its jaws around a vital area. The beast then hangs on until either it or its foe is dead, grinding its massive teeth together to chew through hide, flesh, and bone. A saw-toothed grank that locks its jaws onto a larger creature may be taken for quite a ride before it brings down its prey, but most granks learn which combats they can survive and which prey they should avoid. A saw-toothed grank has very acute hearing and uses the hairs growing from its flank to detect minute vibrations in the ground. Coupled with its keen senses, this enables a grank to track down nearly any prey.

Saw-toothed granks mate once every five to six years. A mated couple stays together for three years, during which time the female gives birth to exactly two cubs. When the cubs are three years old, the family splits—the male cubs follow the father, while the female cubs follow the mother. Each parent teaches its young how to hunt and fend for themselves, and within a few more years, the young have grown into adults and have all of their parents' skill.

Saw-toothed granks are popular as pets and fighting animals because of their small size and great hunting skill. However, when a mated pair is taken offworld, they often breed beyond an owner's ability to manage them. The owner usually releases the unwanted cubs into the wild, where they become a roving threat. On Naboo, the grank population is kept in check because the natives know to move into or through water to escape from the hungry beasts. But the creatures of other worlds don't instinctively head for water when attacked, and so the granks prosper, and their population explodes. Eventually, the saw-toothed granks come into contact with a settlement and begin preying on sentient life.

Species Traits

Low-Light Vision: A saw-toothed grank can see twice as far as normal in poor lighting situations. The saw-toothed grank can still distinguish colors, even in dim light.

Improved Charge: When a saw-toothed grank charges, its bite deals 2d6+12 points of damage.

Improved Grab: If a saw-toothed grank hits with a bite attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. No initial touch attack is required. Opponents cannot move past a creature using improved grab. A creature with improved grab draws held opponents toward it (that is, into the 2-meter-by-2-meter space around it). Creatures of Small size or lesser are grappled by a saw-toothed grank normally. If a saw-toothed grank successfully wins a grapple check against a creature of Medium size or larger, it actually does not grapple the creature, instead locking itself onto the target and automatically dealing bite damage each round until it is knocked out or a successful grapple check dislodges it.

A saw-toothed grank gains a +4 bonus to all grapple checks.

Grind: When a saw-toothed grank wins a grapple check against a target for 2 consecutive rounds, it begins to grind its powerful teeth together. This deals 2d6+8 points of damage to the target. The grank continues to deal this damage with every subsequent grapple check until it is dislodged.

Scent: A saw-toothed grank can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. It can identify familiar odors just as Humans recognize familiar sights and detect opponents within 10 meters by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 20 meters; if downwind, it drops to 6 meters. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents can be detected at triple ranges.

When a saw-toothed grank detects a scent, the exact location is not revealed. Instead, the saw-toothed grank knows only that its quarry is present somewhere within range. It must spend a full-round action to note the direction of the scent. At a range of 2 meters, a saw-toothed grank can pinpoint the exact location of the scent. Saw-toothed granks do not need to guess the location of a fully concealed opponent detected this way.

A saw-toothed grank can also follow tracks by smell, making a Survival check to find or follow a track. The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10 (no matter what kind of surface holds the scent). This increases or decreases depending on the strength of the quarry's odor, the number of creatures, and the age of the trail. For each hour that has passed, the DC increases by 2. This ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. A saw-toothed grank tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

Tremorsense: Using its sensitivity to ground vibrations, a saw-toothed grank automatically senses the location of any creature within 20 meters that is in contact with the ground.

Saw-Toothed Grank: Small predator 6; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 19 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural); Spd 20 m; VP/WP 33/12; Atk +12 melee (1d6+6, bite) or +10 ranged; SQ species traits; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +3; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep +1; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 13, Cha 9. Challenge Code E.

Skills: Hide +8, Jump +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +14, Survival +12.

Feats: Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite).

The Master Hunter Template

Master hunter creatures are exemplary specimens of their species, far more dangerous than others of their kind. These creatures are often older and more experienced than typical specimens, but sometimes they're simply freaks of evolution. In some cases, they have a distinguishing trait, such as an unusual color or larger-than-normal ears. What unites all master hunter creatures is the drive and skill to seek out and bring down prey of a much higher caliber. A single predator of this type can terrorize a community, and it might take specialized big-game hunters to capture or kill it.

Creating a Master Hunter Creature

"Master Hunter" is a template that can be added to any predator (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). A master hunter creature uses all the statistics and special abilities of the base creature except as noted below.

Attack: Double the number of damage dice for bite and claw attacks. Other forms of attack are unchanged.

Special Qualities: The master hunter gains the special qualities detailed below.

- **Scent:** The master hunter gains the scent ability.
- **Uncanny Dodge:** The master hunter cannot be flanked. This defense denies bounty hunters the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack.
- **Unerring Track:** The master hunter gains a +8 species bonus to all Survival checks to track with either scent or the Track feat.

Skills: The master hunter gains a +4 species bonus to all Spot checks.

Feats: The master hunter gains the Track feat if it didn't already have it. It also gains Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, and Improved Critical with its primary attack, even if it doesn't qualify for these feats.

Abilities: The master hunter has +4 Con and +4 Wis.

Sample Master Hunter

Here's a sample master hunter creature, using a nexu as the base creature.

Black Nexu: Medium predator 4; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 16 (+4 Dex, +2 natural); Spd 16 m; VP/WP 43/21; Atk +7 melee (2d6+3, 19–20, 2 claws) and +2 melee (2d8+3, bite) or +8 ranged; SQ scent, uncanny dodge, unerring track, +2 on Listen and Survival checks, +4 on Spot checks; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +5; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; FP 0; DSP 0; Str 17, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 5, Wis 18, Cha 12. Challenge Code D.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +8, Jump +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +10, Survival +6.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Run, Spring Attack, Track.

About the Author

Owen Kirker Clifford Stephens is a freelance game writer and developer. He attended the TSR Writer's Workshop held at the Wizards of the Coast Game Center in 1997 and moved to the Seattle area in 2000 after accepting a job as a Game Designer at Wizards of the Coast. Fourteen months later he returned to Norman, Oklahoma with his wife and three cats to pick up his freelance career. He's written or co-written numerous *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* and *EverQuest* projects, plus *Bastards and Bloodlines* from Green Ronin. He's produced various IDA products, including the Stand-Ins printable figures, and written a regular column on d20 games for Steve Jackson Games' *Pyramid* online magazine.

